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Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Note by the Secretary-General

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit, for the attention of the General Assembly, the attached report, conveyed to him by the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, concerning the review of programme management in the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division.

2. The Secretary-General takes note of its findings and concurs with its recommendations.

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e Office of Internal Oversight Services on the ogramme management in the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division

Prevention and Criminal Justice Division operates under the overall e Director General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, who also ited Nations International Drug Control Programme. Yet, there is little dance and oversight provided by top management, which suggests that the has been conducting its work in a quasi-independent manner.

guidance and direct involvement of upper management is manifest in the clear strategic direction, including resource mobilization. It is also manifest in the manner in which the resources of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme are being managed and the priorities are being addressed.

While it is acknowledged that the resources available are not commensurate with the increasing demands on the programme, it should also be acknowledged that the approach of the secretariat towards the challenges posed by the financial constraints appear thus far to be piecemeal and lacking strategic thinking. As a result, resources have been spread very thinly and in many instances are insufficient for a meaningful contribution towards the issues covered.

was impressed with the staff motivation and hard work in the Division and noted the considerable amount of work being done on a broad range of issues. However, there is a strong indication that the programme is becoming less focused and that priorities are not being given sufficient attention. Should this be allowed to continue, the programme could spread in an unprioritized and unstructured manner.

constraints require strict selectivity in the issues to be covered and e action to be taken in respect of each of these issues. Issues of overlap rities with other organizations must also be addressed at the programme In this connection, it is noted that a substantial part of the Division's work ated matters and topics that fall within the purview of other organizations for Human Rights, the United Nations International Drug Control nited Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Centre for an Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Environment Programme rtment for Peacekeeping Operations and the Division for the Advancement his is not to say that the work is duplicative, but one could certainly make better division of labour through building up more effective collaborative other programmes and United Nations entities, in particular the United f institutes that deal with crime.

t to the selectivity of issues to be covered, the ongoing efforts by the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to impose self restraint in the mandates is indeed commendable and should be encouraged. However, ts need to be undertaken by the secretariat to focus more on its programme greater integration of interrelated issues into fewer activities and by

refraining from expanding its role in areas where it does not have a comparative advantage and/or where the value added of its contribution is minimal. In this regard, the programme planning and budgetary process should be used more effectively than has been the case up to this point. This is particularly important with respect to the preparation of programme budget implications in response to new mandates.

In this connection, it is worth stressing that any efforts of the secretariat to rationalize the use of its resources or to produce more with less require an assessment and evaluation of the programme's activities in order to identify areas which lend themselves to streamlining. A first step in this direction would be to effect a clearer balance between the role that the secretariat wishes to assume as a servicing body and its role as a provider of technical assistance. Currently, the largest proportion of the Division's activities is directed to servicing legislative bodies. Clarity is also necessary with respect to the nature of the servicing that the secretariat provides, (i.e., substantive and analytical, versus compilation of responses to questionnaires and provision of background information).

The secretariat also needs to address the question of the relatively large volume of documentation prepared for the Commission. It appears paradoxical that despite resource constraints, the secretariat has endeavoured, year after year, to add, on its own initiative, a substantial number of documents and conference room papers for the Commission's meetings. Therefore, the documentation issued by the Division ought to be given a fresh look and critically examined in order to ascertain whether its periodicity is warranted and whether some of the issues covered could be subsumed or consolidated in fewer documents. A better utilization of the scarce resources available for technical assistance is also warranted. Thus, it was noted that during the period 1994-1997, 49 per cent of the tasks and missions undertaken by the two interregional advisers dealt with non-operational or advisory matters.

Much remains to be done by the secretariat to reorient the programme from standard-setting to a greater emphasis on assistance to Member States in implementing standards and in researching issues relating to transnational and organized crimes. The current skills profile of the Division's staff would not appear to facilitate such a reorientation. Accordingly, a parallel reorganization and reorientation of staff skills is essential. Equally essential is the establishment of an effective system for tracking progress in programme implementation, assessing results and providing feedback to upper management. At present, such a system is non-existent.

Last but not least, the new managerial structure in Vienna presents an opportunity for maximizing the resource base of the programme, first, by fostering synergies between the crime and drug programmes, and second, by absorbing some non-substantive functions relating to the secretariat of the Commission and administrative support. In essence, every effort should be made to ensure that the resources of the programme are entirely devoted to the execution of the mandated work, and that those in charge of the programme are sufficiently empowered to authorize expenditures from the programme's appropriation. The current arrangement, whereby the certifying authority rests solely with administration, blurs responsibility and should be discontinued.

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I. Introduction

1. The origin of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division is traceable to the Section of Social Defence, which was created shortly after the establishment of the United Nations.

2. One of the first activities of the Section of Social Defence was to gather and compile official crime statistics from Member States. Later, the Section was reorganized and renamed the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section. In 1977, the Section was elevated to a Branch and placed under the overall direction of the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. After a subsequent reorganization of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations and the dissolution of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the Branch was affiliated with the United Nations Office at Vienna under the Direction of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna.

3. At its fiftieth session, the General Assembly approved the elevation of the Branch to the status of Division. More recently, as part of the Secretary-General's reform measures submitted to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly (A/51/950), it is proposed to strengthen the Division for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and transform it into a Centre for International Crime Prevention. The new Centre will operate within a common managerial structure with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. Together they will form a new Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention under the direction of the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

4. In terms of work, the major focus of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme since its establishment in the early 1950s until 1992, was on setting standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice. Throughout the years, a series of standards and norms has been developed and adopted. A related major activity during the period has been the organization and preparation of the quinquennial United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders. The First Congress was held at Geneva in 1955, and the Ninth Congress was held at Cairo in 1995.

5. Since 1992, and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/152 of 18 December 1991, the programme has been undergoing a reorientation from standard setting to a greater emphasis on assistance to Member States in implementing standards and norms and in meeting the challenges of crime prevention and criminal justice as set forth in the statement of principles and programme of action contained in the annex to resolution 46/152. The aforementioned resolution also called for the establishment of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice that, as of the same year, became the policy-making body of the United Nations in the field of crime control. Composed of representatives of 40 Governments, the Commission is a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council. Its sessions are held annually in Vienna. So far, six sessions of the Commission have been held, the latest from 28 April to 9 May 1997.

6. At its first session, in 1992, the Commission decided that the following priority areas should guide its work:

(a) International action to combat national and transnational crime, organized crime and economic crime, including money laundering;

(b) Promoting the role of criminal law in the protection of the environment;

(c) Crime prevention in urban areas, juvenile and violent criminality;

(d) Improving the efficiency and fairness of the administration of the criminal justice systems, with due emphasis on the strengthening of national capacities in developing countries for the regular collection, collation, analysis and utilization of data in the development and implementation of appropriate policies.

In addition, the Commission decided to make technical assistance and standards and norms in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice standing items the agenda for future sessions.

7. The implementation of policies set by the Commission is the responsibility of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division. The responsibilities of the Division as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 46/152 are as follows:

(a) To mobilize existing resources, including institutes, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other competent authorities for the implementation of the programme;

(b) To coordinate research, training and the collection of data on crime and justice, and provide technical assistance and practical information for Member States, particularly through the Global Crime and Criminal Justice Information Network;

(c) To assist the Commission in the preparation of its work and in the preparations for the congresses and any other events relating to the programme;

(d) To ensure that potential donors are put in touch with countries needing criminal justice assistance;

(e) To make the case for assistance in the field of criminal justice to the appropriate funding agencies.

8. In response to the urgent needs for international cooperation against crime, the priority areas adopted by the Commission at its first session were reaffirmed and elaborated further during various subsequent sessions. Accordingly, there has been a sharp increase in the number of mandates and the demands placed on the programme. Most of these demands cover a broad range of crime-related issues and complex questions of criminal justice policy. These issues are likely to remain on the agenda of the international community into the twenty-first century. However, because of the discrepancy between the resources available to the programme and the increasing demands on it, serious concerns have been raised over the possibility of spreading the work of the Division in an unprioritized, unfocused and unstructured manner.

9. It is against this background that the Office of Internal Oversight Services fielded a team to conduct the present review, with the purpose of assessing whether the Division was operating in an environment that facilitated the efficient and effective implementation of the work programme. In conducting its review, the team visited Vienna during the last week of June 1997 and conducted interviews with most of the staff of the Division, including the interregional advisers, the associate experts and the interns associated with the work of the Division. The Team met with the Officer-in-Charge of the United Nations Office at Vienna and interviewed senior staff of the administration. It also sought the views of some representatives of States members of the Commission. The situation described in the present report is that prevailing at the time of the inspection.

10. Upon completion of the field work, the team examined a substantial number of documents relating to various aspects of the programme and its management. The findings and conclusions of the review are set out in sections II, III and IV below. They are followed by a set of recommendations to be acted upon by the management of the programme.

11. The comments of management were sought on the draft report and were taken into account in the preparation of the final report. The team greatly appreciates the cooperation extended to it by the officials at the United Nations Office at Vienna and the staff of the Division during the review and notes with satisfaction the positive reaction of management to the issues raised in the report. The Executive Director of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, Mr. Pino Arlacchi, has endorsed all the recommendations made and has indicated that they were in line with the plans and initiatives he had already taken.

II. Issues of substance

12. The team devoted a good part of its review to the programme and the way in which the secretariat had been organizing its work and utilizing the resources apportioned to it to address the priority areas designated by the Commission. In this regard, the team noted that the current programme structure consists of four subprogrammes, namely:

(a) *Subprogramme 1:* Operational activities, planning and overall coordination;

(b) *Subprogramme 2:* Collaborative action against transnational crime;

(c) *Subprogramme 3:* Crime prevention and criminal justice management;

(d) *Subprogramme 4:* Crime prevention and criminal justice standards and norms.

Subprogrammes (1) and (2) have been designated high priority in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

13. A lot of technical work is done under subprogrammes (3) and (4), in particular in the areas of collection of data on crime and criminal justice in the setting of standards and norms and in the provision of practical information to Member States through the Global Crime and Criminal Justice Information Network, but the largest proportion of the activities of the Division remains the servicing of its legislative body, namely, the Commission. Thus, the team's review of the programme of work over the period 1994-1997, suggests that it is primarily conceived and structured to service the Commission in the form of preparing parliamentary documentation. An examination of 66 reports and 48 conference room papers submitted to the Commission during that period suggest that, by and large, the servicing was more logistical then substantive. The documentation examined consisted mainly of:

(a) Descriptions of activities undertaken by expert and working groups or other United Nations organizations and intersessional consultations;

(b) Compilations of responses received from Member States on topics relating to standards and norms;

(c) A few studies and overviews relating to specific issues requested by the Commission.

14. The documentation covered a wide variety of matters relating to organized crime, money laundering, the proceeds of crime, juvenile justice, administration of justice, crime prevention, violence against women, urban crime, trafficking in minors, alien smuggling, corruption, economic and environmental crime, firearm regulations and United Nations standards and norms. Other documentation included progress reports on the strengthening of technical cooperation, coordination and international cooperation and strategic management.

15. In this regard, the team noted that the bulk of the documentation prepared related to issues that fell under non-priority subprogrammes. Only a handful of reports addressed the high priority subprogramme of transnational crime.

16. Turning to the activities falling under the first high priority subprogramme, dealing with operational activities, the team reviewed 74 mission reports prepared by the two interregional advisers attached to the Division, and noted that from 1994 until mid-1997, most requests for technical assistance were geared towards increasing the professionalism of police, prosecutors, judges, magistrates and correctional officers. In other cases, assistance was provided for reorganizing a major department in the justice system. In a few cases, seminars and workshops were organized on issues relating to organized transnational crimes.

17. In this regard, the team noted that a substantial number of the missions conducted by the interregional advisers did not relate to operational activities or advisory services. They consisted mainly of participating in and attending expert meetings, promoting cooperative arrangements and fund-raising to finance project proposals. The team is of the opinion that most such activities fall within the responsibility of the secretariat staff. Accordingly, it could not escape the conclusion that the meagre resources available for technical assistance were being further reduced by detracting them from their original purposes.

18. In the light of the above findings, the team is of the opinion that the programme of work as a whole appears to lack direction and focus. Consequently, resources have been spread thinly over a broad range of issues. The problem is compounded by the ever-increasing number of mandates emanating from legislative bodies by which the secretariat is requested to submit additional reports and to convene meetings. In this regard, the team noted that, since 1992, the number of resolutions adopted that call for specific action by the secretariat has almost tripled, from 6 resolutions in 1992 to a high 20 in 1994 and then down to 17 in both 1996 and 1997. It also noted that in the absence of clear strategic direction, little effort was made to rationalize the process, either through strict selectivity of issues to be dealt with, or through the preparation of statements of programme budget implications for the consideration of the legislative body concerned before initiating work towards implementing a resolution.

19. Of the 87 resolutions passed during the period 1992-1997, the team came across only three instances in which a statement of programme budget implications was prepared. These instances related to the preparation of a survey or the organization of expert group meetings. Many resolutions requested the secretariat to report on specific topics, and the preparation of such reports, though time- consuming, has been addressed from within existing resources. Available figures on work-month utilization during the biennium 1994-1995, suggest that an average of 30 per cent of the Professional staff time in the Division was utilized in producing parliamentary documentation. In this connection, the team took note of the fact that the secretariat had endeavoured, year after year, to produce additional documents and conference room papers for submission to Commission meetings.

20. While it is acknowledged that the resources available are not commensurate with the increasing demands on the programme, it should also be acknowledged that the approach of the secretariat towards the challenges posed by the financial constraints appears, so far, to be piecemeal and lacking strategic thinking. As a result, resources have been spread thinly, to the point of losing the critical mass necessary for a meaningful contribution towards the issues covered. In this connection, it is noted that a substantial part of the Division's work deals with interrelated matters on topics that fall within the purview of other United Nations entities (i.e., the Centre for Human Rights, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Centre for Habitat and Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development etc.). This is not to say that the work is duplicative, but one could certainly make a strong case for a better division of labour through building more effective collaborative relationships with other programmes and United Nations entities, particularly the United Nations network of institutes that deal with crime. In the team's view, a better division of labour would maximize the

potential of the existing resources of the Division and strengthen the programme as a whole.

21. Financial constraints require strict selectivity in the issues to be covered and the prioritization of action to be taken in respect of each of these issues. Issues of overlap and complementarities with other organizations must also be addressed at the programme preparation stage. With respect to the selectivity of issues to be covered, the team noted recent efforts made by the Commission with regard to the establishment of practical and effective rules for the strategic management of the Division. These efforts included the simplification of the Commission's agenda, the reduction of the number of resolutions, the limitation of requests for more reports, the formulation of multi-year work plans so that each year is devoted to the discussion of a specific subject or theme and the elaboration of a set of criteria to guide the Commission in selecting agenda items for its sessional meetings. While these efforts may contribute to aligning mandates with resource requirements, the team believes that simultaneous efforts need to be undertaken by the secretariat to focus more on its programme of work through greater integration of interrelated issues into fewer activities and by refraining from expanding its role in areas where it does not have a comparative advantage and/or where the value added of its contribution is minimal. In this regard, the programme planning and budgetary process should be used more effectively than has been the case up to this point in time. This is particularly true with respect to the preparation of programme budget implications in response to new mandates. It is also true of the manner in which the secretariat translates the mandates into activities at the stage of formulating its proposed programme of work.

III. Coordination and oversight

A. Coordination

22. The Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division does not have a system to ensure the proper coordination of the programme. This is particularly evident in the case of those institutes that work closely under the United Nations umbrella. The current arrangement to exploit existing complementarities with these institutes and to seek better integration of their respective programmes with that of the Division appears to be extremely modest and less than expected for a secretariat mandated to do so as part of its overall primary responsibility, especially when this aspect of the work is designated high priority.

23. The team is aware of existing collaborative arrangements between the Division, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the Centre for Human Rights, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and other United Nations entities. However, the collaboration with the United Nations-affiliated institutes that address the same programmatic objectives, carries different weight. Currently, there are five interregional/regional institutes: the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, the United Nations African Regional Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control and the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, as well as seven other affiliated institutes. The team's findings suggest that, aside from the annual coordination meetings, the reports to the Commission on the activities of the institutes and some ad hoc collaborative undertakings by the interregional advisers, the involvement of the Division with the institutes remains formal and far from effective. Yet, the importance of coordination and collaboration with these institutes has been stressed in a number of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions. In particular, in the statement of principles and programme of action of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme contained in the annex to Assembly resolution 46/152, the following collaborative arrangements are considered essential for the creation of an effective programme, and for strengthening its operational capacity:

(a) The institutes should keep one another and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice informed on a regular basis about their programme of work and its implementation;

(b) The Commission may request the institutes, subject to the availability of resources, to implement select elements of the programme;

(c) The Commission may also suggest areas for inter-institute activities;

(d) The Commission shall seek to mobilize extrabudgetary support for the activities of the institutes.

24. In this connection, the team noted that some of the institutes are extending their activities beyond research, towards the provision of technical assistance and training. UNICRI is a case in point. The institute is financed through extrabudgetary resources, and its staffing strength surpasses

that of the Division. It was originally conceived as the "research arm" of the Division. However, its involvement in providing technical assistance is duplicative to the work of the Division.

25. The team is of the opinion that there exists a host of untapped possibilities for closer collaboration between the Division and the institutes. The ultimate objective of such a collaboration is to establish a clear division of labour and to optimize the utilization of resources available to the programme as a whole. In this connection, it is worth noting that management acknowledges the necessity of exploring complementarities and strengthening the working relations between the Division and the institutes. It attributes the existing insufficient level of coordination to the lack of resources. The team could not subscribe to this explanation and believes that the issue is one of effective utilization of resources through prioritization. There is little evidence to suggest that the issue of coordination with the institutes has been given the attention it deserves by management. Thus, the work-months reported utilized for coordination in the biennium 1994-1995, amounted to 30 per cent of the total staffing resources of the Division, i.e., 137 work-months. Of this total, only 6.5 work-months were reported utilized for coordination with the institutes.

26. A first step in the direction of strengthening the collaboration between the Division and the United Nations-affiliated institutes should be to reaffirm the role of the Commission in overseeing the activities of these institutes and to ensure that their work is supportive to and not competitive with the Division. The team is of the view that the oversight function should be exercised by the Division, as the Secretariat body within the United Nations system that implements the policy decisions of the Commission, formulates policy options and coordinates crime prevention and criminal justice activities, both within the United Nations and at the intergovernmental level. The secretariat should report to the Commission on the extent to which the work of the institutes is focusing on the priorities and on the degree of coherence between their respective work programmes.

B. Self-monitoring and self-evaluation

27. The team did not come across any systematic monitoring of the implementation of the work programme against established objectives, schedules or standards. In this connection, it was noted that the reporting by the Division on the status of implementation of its 1994-1995 programme of work for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations (A/51/128 and Add.1) was inadequate. In many instances, the reporting did not reflect properly what was actually produced by the Division and/or the attendant resources in work-months. It was evident to the team that there was little oversight within the Division to ensure the authenticity of the information reported by individual programme managers. As for self evaluation,it is practically non-existent. As noted earlier, the existing resources are stretched too thin,and insufficient attention is given to evaluating results and using findings to improve the programme.

28. With the present state of affairs, the team is of the opinion that the management of the Division did not put in place adequate means to oversee effectively its programme of work and identify weaknesses in implementation. Accordingly, it also lacks an informed basis for allocating its scarce resources or providing feedback to upper management on important programmatic and managerial issues.

29. In this connection, it is worth stressing that any efforts of the secretariat to rationalize the use of its resources or to produce more with less require the assessment and evaluation of the programme's activities in order to identify areas that lend themselves to streamlining. A first step in this direction would be to provide a clearer balance between the role that the secretariat wishes to assume as a servicing body and its role as a provider of technical assistance. Clarity is also necessary with respect to the nature of the servicing that the secretariat provides (i.e., substantive and analytical versus compilation of responses to questionnaires and provision of background information).

30. The secretariat also needs to address the question of the relatively large volume of documentation prepared for the Commission. The documentation issued by the Division ought to be given a fresh look and critically examined in order to ascertain whether its periodicity is warranted and whether some of the issues covered could be subsumed or consolidated into fewer documents. In this connection, it is worth conducting some workload analysis for the documentation issued in order to establish some standards or norms against which efficiency could be monitored.

IV. Issues of organization, staffing and management

31. The resources at the disposal of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division are modest. The bulk of it comes from the regular budget of the United Nations. During

the biennium 1996-1997, the Division's authorized staffing table consisted of 16 Professional and 6 General Service posts. The programme also had at its disposal six Junior Professional posts funded from extrabudgetary resources and two interregional advisers funded under the regular programme for technical cooperation. In addition, three experts paid for by their respective Governments and eight interns were working full time with the Division at the time of the team's visit to Vienna.

32. Prior to 1996, the Division did not have any organizational structure, and the staff were utilized interchangeably to address a variety of issues. The first organizational chart of the Division was formalized in 1996, as reflected in the Secretary-General's bulletin of 6 June 1996 (ST/SGB/Organization, Section:UNOV) (see annex). Accordingly, two sections and two units were established, namely, the Operational Activities and Commission's Secretariat Section, the Transnational Crime Section, the Criminal Justice Systems Management and Information Unit and the Crime Prevention and Strategies Unit. The organizational chart corresponded to the four subprogrammes in the 1996-1997 programmatic structure. The distribution of the staffing resources in the budget document reflected the relative priorities set by the Commission.

33. On the basis of the interviews conducted and information obtained regarding the work-month utilization, it is not clear whether the programme's priorities were adhered to during implementation. The staff of the Division continued to be used interchangeably to address all issues on the agenda with no apparent prioritization. As a result, resources have been spread too thinly and, in many instances, the critical mass necessary for a meaningful contribution towards the issues addressed was not available. In this connection, the team noted that the responsibilities for the Commission's secretariat functions, the operational activities and overall coordination have been grouped together and assigned to the Deputy Director of the Division, who also acts as focal point vis-à-vis the United Nations Office at Vienna on various budgetary, financial and personnel matters. In the team's view, the Division's meagre resources should be devoted entirely to implementing the programme. The burden of the Commission's secretariat functions could be assumed by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. This is particularly relevant, in the light of the common managerial structure proposed by the Secretary-General and referred to in paragraph 3 above. As for the administrative functions, the team believes that they could be entrusted to an administrative assistant or a junior administrative officer, who could be redeployed from the administrative structure of the United Nations Office at Vienna. The skills of the Deputy Director of the Division could be put to better use by addressing the priority issues under subprogramme (1), particularly as they relate to programme oversight and overall coordination. Special efforts need to be made to put these functions on a firm standing, as suggested in section II above.

34. The diversity in the scope of activities undertaken by the Division has blurred the focus and strategic direction of the programme as a whole and has rendered the relation between the subprogrammes and the organizational structure artificial. In our view, two important factors have contributed to this state of affairs:

(a) The lack of direct involvement of upper management in providing strategic direction to the Division's work. There is little evidence of guidance or oversight provided by the Director General, under whose overall direction the Division operates. In this connection, the team took note of the fact that the Director General approves and transmits the medium-term plan and the programme budget proposals to Headquarters. He also clears all travel requests emanating from the Division. However, such action appears to be formal in nature, and there is no indication of guidance provided to shape the direction of the programme and/or optimize the utilization of resources. There is also little evidence of concerted efforts made by upper management to raise funds in support of the programmes. Under the circumstances, the team could not escape the impression that, since its establishment, the Division has been working in a quasi-independent manner.

(b) The availability of qualified expertise. Staff of the Division have accumulated a fairly unique knowledge with regard to the system of international standards and norms and the related procedures for their implementation. The team noted that over the years, a lot of good work has been undertaken in this area and that such work has been acclaimed by the Commission. In no small measure, this is attributed to the high motivation and dedication of the staff. During the interviews, the team was indeed impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of those working in the Division. However, the level of expertise of the staff is modest when it comes to addressing newly emerging needs in the areas of organized crime and its related consequences. Expertise is also limited when it comes to supporting operational activities in terms of project formulation, implementation and assessment.

35. In this connection, the team noted that most of the staff have been working with the Division since its establishment

as a Branch under the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. Most of them still carry the functional title of "Social Affairs Officer", on their P-5 action forms, and many job descriptions examined did not reflect the changes in the functions of the incumbents. It was also clear that over the years most of them have had little time or opportunity to upgrade their knowledge and expertise to meet the challenges of the new requirements of the programme except through on-the-job training. In this regard, the team did not come across any training programmes organized by management to keep staff abreast of the latest developments and thinking in their respective fields of work. The result is that most of the staff could be considered "generalists" on different issues of crime prevention and criminal justice. They are experienced, but their technical capabilities have not evolved much to address the shift of emphasis in the programme from standards and norms to transnational organized crime and its linkages with terrorism, violence and money laundering. The situation is compounded by the fact that in recent years there has been little recruitment of outside expertise.

36. Under the circumstances, the emphasis given to issues of relatively lower priority in the formulation and implementation of the programme becomes more understandable. In order to address these new challenges, better knowledge and certain expertise is needed on the nature, dynamics and operation of the diversified forms of organized crime. The team believes that the Division should endeavour to build a core of specialized staff in key areas, both through the provision of intensive training to upgrade the expertise of existing staff and through outside recruitment whenever a vacancy arises. The above should lead to a reorganization of the Division's structure to reflect this specialization. Furthermore, in view of the reorientation of the programme, a growing component of the Division's work will eventually consist of advisory services and technical cooperation projects. In the team's view, the absence of adequate expertise within the Division for effective project appraisal, execution and assessment, and the noticeable lack of knowledge in project development and management are matters that need to be addressed through training. The availability of such expertise is essential to provide qualitative support to technical assistance activities in the form of research. This aspect reinforces the need for a specialized core staff referred to earlier.

37. The administrative and financial management of the Division is handled by the United Nations Office at Vienna. Thus, all travel requests have to be approved by the Office of the Director General and the requests for consultants are screened by the administration of the United Nations Office at Vienna, which also approves payments after receiving a copy of the consultant's work to ascertain the delivery of services. In the team's view, the administration is assuming the responsibility of an executive office and, to some extent, the responsibility of the programme manager. The team attributes this anomaly to the absence of executive office capabilities within the Division and to the fact that the certification authority for committing funds appropriated to the Division rests solely with the administration of the United Nations Office at Vienna and not the Director of the Division.

38. The team is of the opinion that the above situation has blurred the accountability of the programme manager without necessarily contributing to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilization. The Director of the Division should be empowered to clear the travel of his staff and authorize disbursements from the sums allotted to the programme. He should assume full responsibility for ascertaining the delivery of services by the staff of the Division, including the consultants working for the programme. The administration's role should be limited to monitoring the exercise of this authority and approving expenditures.

V. Recommendations

39. The Director General should establish internal arrangements to provide guidance and strategic direction to the Division, including resource mobilization. (SP-97-001-1) (para. 34)

40. The Director General should ensure that the Division establishes a system for self monitoring and self evaluation, and that such a system is capable of providing his office with the necessary feedback to enable him to exercise his oversight responsibility. (SP-97-001-2) (paras. 27 and 28)

41. The Division should reorganize its work in a manner that focuses on the relative priorities of the programme and should avoid spreading the limited resources thinly. (SP-97-001-3) (paras. 15-18, 21 and 27)

42. A clearer balance should be established between the role of the secretariat as a servicing body and its role as a provider of technical assistance and policy advice to Member States. (SP-97-001-4) (paras. 19 and 29)

43. The secretariat should aim at providing servicing of a more substantive nature for the meetings of the Commission, in the form of qualitative analysis of emerging issues and policy options for consideration by the Commission. (SP-97-001-5) (para. 13)

44. Parliamentary documentation should be critically examined in order to ascertain whether its periodicity is warranted. The possibility of reducing the volume of documentation by subsuming the issues covered under a few documents should be explored. (SP-97-001-6) (paras. 19 and 30)

45. The services of the interregional advisers should be mainly directed towards the provision of technical assistance to Member States. The use of their services for any other purposes should be discontinued. (SP-97-001-7) (para. 17)

46. The Division should establish an effective system for tracking the progress of programme implementation, assessing results and providing feedback to upper management, namely, the Director General. (SP-97-001-8) (paras. 27 and 28)

47. Concerted efforts need to be made to build a more effective collaborative relationship with the United Nations network of institutes that deal with crime. The Division should endeavour to involve itself at the stage of formulation of the respective programmes of the institutes and should assume an active role in influencing the content and direction of such programmes. This can only be achieved if adequate institutional arrangements are established to ensure that the United Nations-affiliated institutes operate under the aegis of the Division. (SP-97-001-9) (paras. 22-26)

48. The Deputy Director of the Division should be fully involved in implementing the activities under high priority subprogramme 1. These are reflected in the three recommendations contained in paragraphs 45 to 47 above. (SP-97-001-10) (para. 33)

49. The management of the Division should ensure that a statement of programme budget implications is submitted to the Commission before any steps are taken to undertake activities emanating from new resolutions. The statement must emphasize the workload burden and the programmatic implications in the absence of funding already identified and secured for the implementation of such activities. (SP-97-001-11) (para. 21)

50. The Division should endeavour to build up a core of technical staff specialized in the emerging areas related to organized crime, both through the provision of adequate training to upgrade existing expertise and through outside recruitment. Training is also required in project development and management to provide the necessary support to technical assistance activities. (SP-97-001-12) (paras. 34-36)

51. The internal structure of the Division should be reorganized according to the specialization lines referred to above. (SP-97-001-13) (para. 36)

52. The Director of the Division should be empowe[red] to the full extent allowable by the Personnel and Fin[ancial] Regulations of the United Nations. This should inclu[de] authority to certify expenditures from the progra[mme] appropriations. That empowerment should be docum[ented] as part of the authority delegated by the Director Gen[eral] a senior manager responsible for the implementatio[n] programme. The delegation should clearly reflect the [limits] of such authority and the accountability that accomp[anies] it. (SP-97-001-14) (para. 38)

53. The Division of Administration should provi[de] necessary administrative support to the Division throu[gh] redeployment of an administrative officer, who wou[ld] as the operational partner of the administration [for] financial, human resources and support ma[tters] (SP-97-001-15) (para. 33)

(*Signed*) Karl Th. **Pa[ul]**
Under-Secretary-Gener[al]
Internal Oversight Se[rvice]

Appendix

Organizational chart